

## THE CONFESSIONS OF A WIFE

### WHY MAGGIE QUIT

#### Chapter XCV.

When I got over to the Waverly's this morning I found everything "up in the air," as Dick would say.

I could see that Dad was irritable; that Mollie had been crying, and that Mrs. Waverly, Sr., considered herself a much abused person. The trained nurse had left the day before and poor Mollie was nearly distracted trying to wait on both her father and mother and oversee the housemaid and the laundress who works there every Monday.

When I arrived they were all at luncheon and I noticed that Maggie, the maid, had a most belligerent aspect as she brought in the waffles, of which Dad was very fond. Maggie is a splendid housekeeper and I have often wondered why she stayed with the family, for Mrs. Waverly insisted upon her doing the entire work of the house except the washing and she was allowed very few privileges.

After luncheon Mollie told me Maggie was going to leave.

"I cannot do anything with her. She overheard mother call her 'a kitchen mechanic' the other day and it's all off.

"She can get her own kitchen mechanics," said Maggie when I went out to her. "Isn't it meself that has slaved all through this sickness in the house and put up with the flipptty ways of that trained nurse and now because I had to leave the bread in the oven to burn while I ran upstairs to wait on her, she calls me a 'kitchen mechanic.' It's leavin' I am this day and learnin' the manicure trade I'll be doin'."

Just why the words "kitchen mechanic" have come to be the badge of ignoble servitude is unanswerable.

Webster defines a mechanic as "one who practices any mechanic art, one skilled in shaping or uniting materials into any kind of structure, machine or other object requiring the

use of tools or instruments."

A man is always proud of being called a skilled mechanic and as one of the most necessary requisites to the well being of modern life is the cookstove, why should not the person who uses it "in shaping and uniting materials" into life sustenance be employed in quite as dignified an occupation as the one who has made the stove.

A skilled mechanic in the kitchen is perhaps more important than a skilled mechanic in the shop.

We must all eat to live and that everyone should be able to do something with the hands is one of the first commands of the social economists. If there is any work of woman's hands that is more important or even more interesting than the cooking and serving of a well proportioned meal it has not yet been brought to the welfare of those who race at heart.

"You do be talking mighty fine," said Maggie when I tried to tell her this. "But it's in the manicure parlors I can mate nice young men who would not look at me if I told them it was in a kitchen I was workin'."

"Ye can be the best cook in the world, but it won't get ye anywhere with a young man. He is lookin' fer the girl whose hair is done in the latest style and who can invite her beau to meet her at the parlor of her boarding house instead of the back kitchen door of her employer's home. Thank ye just the same, Mrs. Waverly, but I'm not going to be any kind of a mechanic any longer. It's a manicure artist that I'll be."

There you have it. I thought, after talking with Maggie, we may have wonderful high-sounding theories about all sorts of things in a working woman's life, but after all it resolves itself into "the way of a man with a maid."

(To Be Continued Tomorrow.)